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ABSTRACT

The statements presented in this document are the outcome of four years of study on the part of schools offering diploma programs in nursing, the membership of the Council of Diploma Programs, and various other programs that are particularly concerned with the evaluation of diploma programs. Sections on the historical development of the criteria (1954 to 1969) and their purposes precede the statements of criteria in the following areas: (1) philosophy and objectives, (2) administration and organization, (3) faculty, (4) students, (5) curriculum, and (6) resources, facilities, and services. (JK)

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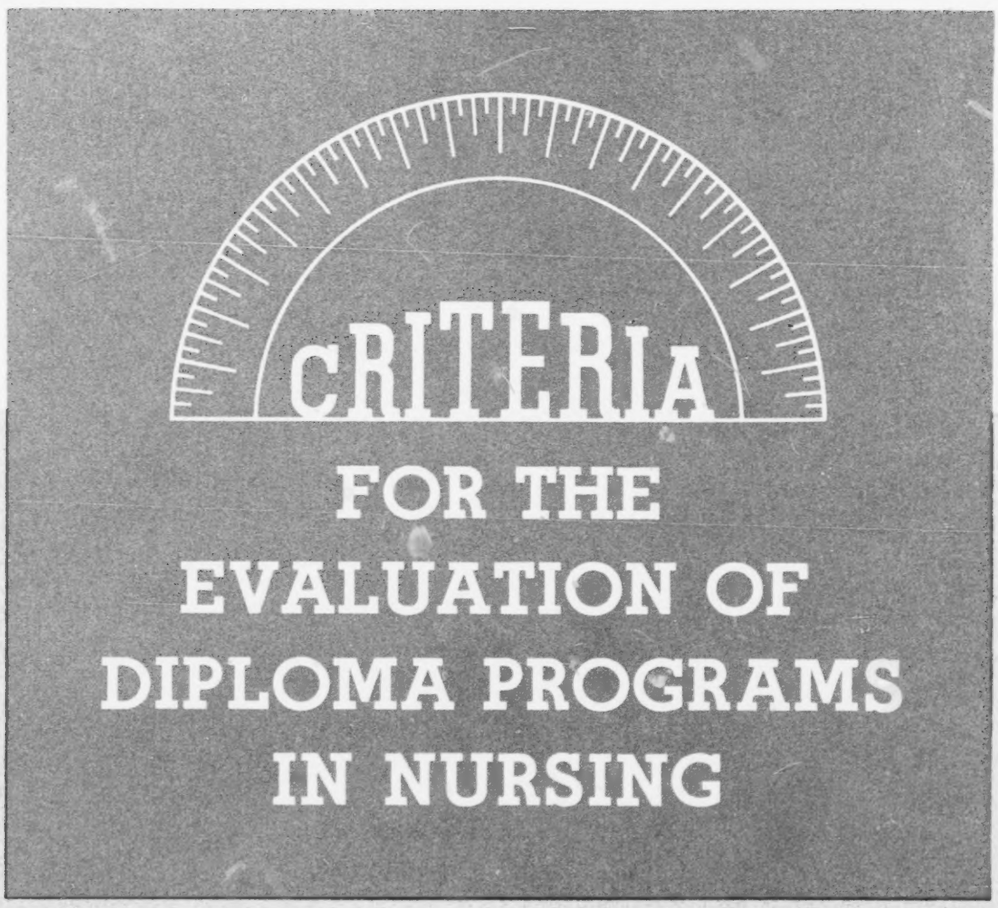

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Department of Diploma Programs
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Third Edition

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PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION

The statements of criteria presented in this document are the outcome of four years of study on the part of schools offering diploma programs in nursing, of the membership of the Council of Diploma Programs, and of various other groups that are particularly concerned with the evaluation of diploma programs, such as the Executive Committee of the Council and the Board of Review for Diploma Programs. As in the past, particular emphasis was placed on securing the participation of schools. In the course of the study period, the schools that are members of the Council of Diploma Programs were solicited for their suggestions and comments on four separate occasions. On two of these occasions, drafts of proposed revisions of the criteria were sent to the council membership together with requests for comments regarding the clarity and appropriateness of the statements and for substitute statements. In each instance, careful consideration of the schools' responses resulted in reformulation of the criteria.

This third edition of the criteria, then, is not the product of a small group of people who look at nursing education from a single point of view. Rather, it has been developed by many thousands of people who, as a whole, are representative of the several viewpoints from which the preparation of students in schools offering diploma programs in nursing might be regarded.

—Ad Hoc Committee on Criteria
NLN Council of Diploma Programs

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DEFINITIONS OF TERMS AS USED IN THE CRITERIA

The following definitions were developed by the members of the Ad Hoc Committee on Criteria as a common frame of reference for their use in revising the criteria.

School. An entity that (1) is controlled by an identifiable group; (2) has students enrolled for a specific purpose; (3) has a faculty; (4) has other appropriate personnel; (5) provides services to the student body, faculty, and other personnel; (6) has educational facilities and resources; and (7) offers a planned curriculum leading to a diploma.

Governing body. The identifiable group that has ultimate control of the school, such as board of directors, board of trustees, city management, county commissioners, et cetera.

Curriculum. The course offerings that make up the program of study.

Levels of progression. Major stages of achievement reached by students as they progress through the curriculum.

Course. The organized subject matter and related activities, including laboratory experiences, planned to achieve specific objectives and offered within a given time period.

Services. Activities of the school other than those related to curriculum.

Facilities. The physical structures that serve, or are utilized by, the school.

Resources. The personnel, materials, and finances necessary to the operation of the school.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE CRITERIA

Early in the 1950's, the development of the first edition of these criteria was initiated in response to a demand by faculties in schools of nursing for pertinent criteria that they could use in developing and evaluating the diploma programs of study for which they were responsible.

1954.—The Steering Committee of the Division of Nursing Education of the National League for Nursing appointed an ad hoc group in January of 1954 to formulate more definite criteria. This group, entitled Subcommittee to Develop More Definite Criteria for the Evaluation of Educational Programs in Nursing, had representation from the Department of Baccalaureate and Higher Degree Programs and from the Department of Diploma and Associate Degree Programs. At its first meeting in March, 1954, it agreed that its first task was to differentiate the criteria used in the evaluation of programs leading to a bachelor of science in nursing degree from those used in the evaluation of programs leading to a diploma or to an associate degree in nursing. Also, it agreed that criteria for the evaluation of curriculum, faculty, and students should have priority.

1955.—The first report of the subcommittee was considered by the Steering Committee of the Division of Nursing Education in January, 1955. At this time, it was decided that those subcommittee members representing diploma and associate degree programs and those representing baccalaureate and higher degree programs should meet separately and develop criteria in their respective areas.

The first draft of the criteria for diploma programs was presented for study in May, 1955, to the Council of Member Agencies of the Department of Diploma and Associate Degree Programs. The member schools, through their representatives, were invited to involve faculty and others interested in diploma programs in nursing in a comprehensive review of the statements and to report the resultant comments, suggestions, and criticisms to the subcommittee.

The September, 1955, meeting of the subcommittee was devoted to the careful consideration of the recommendations of the council members and to the revision of the criteria in the light of these recommendations.

1956.—The subcommittee met again in March of 1956 and developed tentative criteria for the areas of philosophy and objectives, organization and administration, finance, evaluation of students and program, facilities, and records and reports.

In May, 1956, the second draft of the tentative criteria, which included

all the areas considered to date, was sent to the 258 schools that then belonged to the Council of Member Agencies of the Department of Diploma and Associate Degree Programs for study so that they might determine the usefulness and clarity of the statements and make pertinent suggestions for deletions and additions to the criteria.

Again, at its next meeting in June, 1956, the subcommittee studied the recommendations of the council and then further revised the statements of criteria.

In October, 1956, the tentative criteria were sent to all (955) diploma schools of nursing for review and study by their faculty groups and to the presidents and executive secretaries of the state leagues for nursing.

1957.—A follow-up questionnaire was sent in January, 1957, which requested the schools to submit their comments, opinions, and suggestions relative to the tentative criteria. The questionnaire was completed by 573 schools, the majority of which had favorable reactions and indicated approval. At the business meeting of the Department of Diploma and Associate Degree Programs at the 1957 NLN convention, the tentative criteria were presented to the membership of the department for discussion and consideration. After the discussion, the criteria were formally approved by the membership for publication and immediate use by the schools and for use in 1960 by the Board of Review for Diploma Programs in its evaluation of diploma programs for accreditation. It was recognized by the membership, however, that they were evolutionary in character and that revisions and changes would be needed from time to time to keep them abreast of changes in nursing and nursing education.

1960.—In June, 1960, certain general problems related to the use of the criteria were identified by the Board of Review for Diploma Programs, and it recommended that the criteria be edited with a view to eliminating overlapping and duplication, deleting obsolete or unnecessary statements, consolidating several single statements related to the same specific area into one statement, and extending and clarifying other statements in order to increase the usefulness of the criteria by schools in program development. This recommendation was endorsed by the NLN Committee on Accreditation of Hospital Schools of Nursing and was approved by the Steering Committee of the Department of Diploma and Associate Degree Programs.

1961.—Worksheets containing suggested revisions were circulated to all member schools in the Department of Diploma and Associate Degree Programs in February, 1961. At the April, 1961, annual meeting of the Council of Member Agencies of the Department of Diploma and Associate Degree Programs, the recommended criteria were accepted by the council for an interim period until further revisions should be accomplished.

Upon the close of the annual meeting, the Steering Committee of the Department of Diploma and Associate Degree Programs met and confirmed the Council of Member Agencies' acceptance of the recommended statements.

Also, at that meeting, the steering committee delegated the responsibility for further study of criteria to its Subcommittee for Diploma Programs.

Suggestions regarding further revision of the criteria were requested from the faculty of each diploma program. During the May, 1961, meeting of the Subcommittee for Diploma Programs, the comments and suggestions were carefully considered by the subcommittee.

A tentative draft of the revised statements was circulated to the members of the NLN Committee on Accreditation of Hospital Schools of Nursing for review and suggestions. In July, 1961, a special meeting of the Steering Committee of the Department of Diploma and Associate Degree Programs was held for the purpose of considering the revised statements and the suggestions of the Committee on Accreditation of Hospital Schools of Nursing.

In accordance with the directive of the steering committee, a special committee of the Subcommittee for Diploma Programs met in September, 1961, to edit the statements and to make changes in line with the suggestions of the steering committee.

The final draft of *Criteria for the Evaluation of Educational Programs in Nursing Leading to a Diploma* was accepted by the Steering Committee of the Department of Diploma and Associate Degree Programs at its annual meeting in October of 1961 for distribution in January, 1962, to diploma schools of nursing for self-evaluation purposes and for use in June, 1962, by the Board of Review for Diploma Programs in its evaluation of educational programs.

1965.—In December, the Board of Review for Diploma Programs transmitted to the Steering Committee of the Department of Diploma Programs (1) its observation that during the past few years, certain of the criteria as stated in the second, or 1962, edition of *Criteria for the Evaluation of Educational Programs in Nursing Leading to a Diploma* contained words or phrases that needed to be clarified or changed and (2) its recommendation that the document be studied and the statements be revised.

1966.—The Steering Committee of the Department of Diploma Programs considered the observation and the recommendation at its May and October, 1966, meetings and directed its chairman to appoint an ad hoc committee to review the criteria and propose appropriate revisions.

1967.—In advance of the first meeting of the ad hoc committee, the schools holding agency membership in the department (678) were sent forms on which to submit suggestions for (1) changes in the current statements of criteria and (2) additional statements of criteria.

The first meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on Criteria for the Evaluation of Educational Programs in Nursing Leading to a Diploma was held in March, 1967. Attention was given to a review of the second edition of the criteria to determine the areas in which revision and reorganization were needed and to consider the suggestions submitted by the schools. In view of the limited number of responses (12) from agency members, it was concluded by the committee that the schools had not had sufficient time in which

to study the criteria and formulate suggestions and that the study period should be extended. Therefore, September 1, 1967, was established as the new deadline for submission of suggestions for revision. Revision of the beliefs and objectives was initiated, and working definitions for certain terms were formulated.

At the May, 1967, meeting of the Council of Member Agencies, with 1,104 representatives from 555 member schools in attendance, the chairman of the ad hoc committee reported on its first meeting, stressed the role of the schools in the criteria revision process, and urged that suggestions be submitted by the newly established deadline. As of September 1, 1967, 102 additional schools had responded. Eighty-four of the completed forms contained suggestions for revision, and 18 indicated that no changes in the criteria were needed.

The second meeting of the ad hoc committee, held in November, 1967, involved the study of the schools' suggestions, the formulation of additional working definitions, the regrouping of the criteria under fewer major headings, the development of tentative statements of criteria under the headings "Philosophy and Objectives," "Organization and Administration," "Faculty," "Students," and "Curriculum," and the establishment of a time schedule for completion of the committee's assigned responsibilities.

The activities of the ad hoc committee and the time schedule were reported to the council membership in the December, 1967, "Memo to Agency Members."

1968.—At its third meeting, held in February, 1968, the ad hoc committee addressed itself to the development of tentative statements of criteria under the heading "Resources, Facilities, and Services," the refinement of revisions in the other five areas, the preparation of the first draft—for discussion only—of the "Proposals for Revision of Criteria for the Evaluation of Educational Programs in Nursing Leading to a Diploma," and an expansion of the previously established time schedule. The expanded time schedule was reported in the March, 1968, issue of the Council of Diploma Programs "Memo." Three copies of the first draft of the proposals for revision of the criteria accompanied the "Memo," which was distributed to 646 member schools.

The chairman of the ad hoc committee presented a second report of progress to the 608 representatives from 406 member schools in attendance at the May, 1968, annual meeting of the Council of Diploma Programs. She also discussed and clarified various aspects of the first draft of the proposed revisions and answered questions about the criteria and the committee's definitions, rationale for change, and general approach to revision.

At the fourth meeting of the ad hoc committee, held in September of 1968, the group gave first attention to the responses of the schools to the first draft of proposals for revision of the criteria. The responses totaled 315, which indicated that 49 percent of the council membership had fulfilled their responsibility with regard to criteria revision. Using the statistical summaries specific to each statement of the criteria and the raw data pertinent

to comments and suggestions, the committee reviewed the first draft and produced the second draft—again for discussion only—of the proposals. It also clarified the working definitions and redesigned the format so as to facilitate the submission of more discrete suggestions.

Three copies of the second draft of the proposals for revision of the criteria were sent to the member schools together with the September, 1968, issue of the council "Memo."

During November, the 1968 regional workshops of the council provided opportunity for representatives of member schools to consider with their peers the second draft of the proposed revisions. Thus, at the six workshops, approximately 900 representatives from 597 agency members reviewed the draft together with members or representatives of the ad hoc committee, sought general clarification as needed, and posed questions about specific statements of criteria, the working definitions, the uses to be made of criteria, and the revision plan. At each workshop, the chairman stressed the importance of increasing the percentage of school responses.

1969.—The ad hoc committee met for the fifth time in February and again gave first attention to the responses of the schools to the second draft of proposals for revision of the criteria. At this time, the returns totaled 347, which showed that 53.7 percent of the council membership had fulfilled their responsibility with regard to criteria revision. Again using the statistical summaries specific to each statement and the raw data relative to comments and suggestions for editorial changes and restatement of criteria, the committee reviewed the second draft and produced the final draft. It then clarified further the working definitions, developed the statement entitled "Purposes of the Criteria" and formulated for the consideration of the council membership a recommendation regarding the dates for the implementation of the revised criteria.

On March 25, three copies of the final draft of the proposals for revision of the criteria were mailed to member schools together with information about the forthcoming annual meeting of the Council of Diploma Programs, which was scheduled for May 20-21 during the NLN convention.

At the business session of the annual meeting of the council, held on May 21, the revised criteria were presented to the assembled membership for consideration and vote. After discussion, which included several suggestions for editorial change, the proposed criteria were approved by the agency members. Also approved was the time plan for implementation, the provisions of which were distribution of the published document to the schools in the fall of 1969, use of the criteria by the schools in preparing reports of self-evaluation as of July 1, 1970, and use by the Board of Review for Diploma Programs at its late 1970 or early 1971 meeting.

PURPOSES OF THE CRITERIA

Criteria are standards of measurement for appraising the quality and the characteristics of an educational program.

Criteria serve two major purposes, which are:

1. To assist the faculty in developing, improving, evaluating, and interpreting all aspects of the school of nursing.
2. To enable the Board of Review for Diploma Programs to evaluate diploma schools for accreditation.

Criteria are intended to be general enough to permit a variety of approaches to their implementation. Thus, each faculty is free to determine the limits and the directions of the development of its school, and every school need not attain each criterion to the same degree or in the same way as every other school in order to achieve and maintain accreditation.

Since criteria are guides to action and yardsticks against which achievement can be measured, they should not be viewed as absolutes that stifle or inhibit creativity in the development of the school. As diploma programs in nursing change to keep pace with trends in education and advances in the health fields, the criteria will change in order to assure continuing improvement of these programs to the end that graduates will be prepared to meet society's need for quality nursing care.

PHILOSOPHY AND OBJECTIVES

1. The philosophy and the objectives of the school are developed by the faculty.

2. The philosophy and the objectives of the school are in accord with the philosophy and the educational objectives of the governing body.

3. The philosophy of the school expresses its beliefs about education, nursing, and the responsibility of the school to the student.

4. The objectives of the school identify the behavioral changes that are expected to have occurred in the student at the time of graduation.

5. The objectives of the school indicate the kind of position in which the beginning graduate is expected to function.

6. The philosophy and the objectives of the school are utilized in planning, implementing, and evaluating the curriculum and the services offered by the school of nursing.

ADMINISTRATION AND ORGANIZATION

1. The governing body exercises legal authority for the school, determines its general policy, and supports it financially.

2. The organizational plan for the school of nursing provides for relationships:

   a. With the governing body.

   b. Among individuals and groups responsible for and participating in the operation of the school.

   c. With the institutions and agencies that contribute to the curriculum.

3. The authority and the administrative responsibility for the school are delegated by the governing body or its designee to the director of the school.

4. Where the director's responsibility encompasses both nursing service and the school, another faculty member has full-time responsibility for the operation of the school.

5. A budget or financial plan of operation for the school is prepared by the director with the counsel of the faculty and designated administrative personnel, approved by the governing body, and administered by the director.

6. Agreements with the cooperating institutions or agencies state the responsibility and the authority of the school and of the cooperating institutions or agencies.

7. An annual report of the operation of the school is prepared by the director and the faculty and presented to the designated administrative personnel and the governing body.

8. The number of faculty and other staff is consistent with the size of the student body and the needs of the school.

9. Policies for selection, appointment, and promotion of faculty are defined and serve to ensure that faculty members have preparation and experience relevant to designated positions.

10. Job descriptions delineate qualifications for and responsibilities of all faculty positions.

11. The faculty participates in the development of personnel policies that serve to promote recruitment and retention of administrative and instructional personnel for the school.

12. The school administration provides for an ongoing faculty development program.

13. The faculty functions as an organized group through:

    a. Rules and regulations.

    b. A committee structure consistent with the needs of the school.

    c. Maintenance of minutes and reports.

14. The faculty formulates policies that relate to the operation of the school.

15. The faculty plans and implements systematic evaluation of all aspects of the school.

16. The school has a plan for the recruitment of students.

17. A system of records provides for the compilation of information about the faculty, the students, and the graduates of the school.

18. The school catalog is current.

FACULTY

1. The faculty member who has administrative responsibility for the direction of the school has a masters degree.

2. Faculty members have preparation at the masters level pertinent to the responsibilities of their positions or have started study toward the masters degree and have a plan to complete the required preparation, and they have experience commensurate with the responsibilities of their positions.

3. Faculty members assume responsibility commensurate with their positions by:

   a. Continuing their academic preparation and development.

   b. Planning, implementing, and evaluating an ongoing program for their development.

   c. Participating in activities of the faculty organization.

   d. Participating in activities and organizations that advance the professions of nursing and teaching.

STUDENTS

1. Policies for admission, promotion, and graduation are developed, implemented, and evaluated by the faculty.

2. Opportunities are available for students to:

   a. Develop leadership skills.

   b. Assume citizenship responsibilities.

   c. Participate in cultural, social, and religious activities and in pre-professional organizations.

CURRICULUM

1. The curriculum is developed, implemented, controlled, and evaluated by the faculty within the framework of the philosophy, the objectives, and the policies of the school.

2. The curriculum objectives identify changes in behavior expected to occur in students and are used to:
   a. Develop, organize, implement, and evaluate the curriculum.
   b. Identify objectives for levels of progression and for courses.

3. The organizational plan of the curriculum provides for:
   a. Time periods (terms, semesters, quarters).
   b. Levels of progression.
   c. Sequential arrangement of courses.
   d. Balanced distribution of course hours within specified time periods.

4. Development of the curriculum includes:
   a. Selection of basic content for courses in the biological, physical, and behavioral sciences.
   b. Selection of content for courses in the art and science of nursing.
   c. Selection of facilities and resources needed for implementation of the courses.
   d. Intercommunication among all persons involved in teaching.

5. Implementation of the curriculum includes:
   a. Development of outlines that identify all aspects of each course.
   b. Utilization of a variety of teaching methods.
   c. Development and maintenance of an environment consistent with the philosophy and objectives of the school.
   d. Coordination of the use of facilities and resources.
   e. Interpretation of faculty plans for achievement of curriculum objectives to appropriate individuals and groups.

6. **Evaluation of the curriculum includes a plan for systematic assessment of:**

   a. **The student's achievement in courses, at levels of progression, and at termination of the curriculum.**

   b. **The involvement of students in evaluative processes.**

   c. **The graduate's competence in the position specified in the school objectives.**

RESOURCES, FACILITIES, AND SERVICES

1. The resources and facilities meet the needs of the school and include:
   a. Offices for administrative and instructional personnel.
   b. Classrooms, laboratories, conference rooms, and means for utilizing a variety of teaching methods.
   c. Personnel to support the faculty in performing their administrative and educational responsibilities.
2. The resources and facilities essential to the implementation of the curriculum:
   a. Are approved by the appropriate national, regional, or state agencies.
   b. Have personnel sufficient in number, quality, and continuity of employment to ensure an environment conducive to the achievement of all course objectives.
   c. Have patients and other resources sufficient in number and variety to achieve the objectives of nursing courses.
3. The library facilities and resources meet the needs of the students and the faculty.
4. Policies for health services and counseling and guidance services for students are implemented.
5. Policies for housing and food service for students are implemented.